



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE MARY M. MUSHINSKY
EIGHTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4038
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
HOME: (203) 269-8378
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-1902
E-mail: Mary.Mushinsky@cga.ct.gov

ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER

MEMBER
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT
COMMITTEE

Testimony of Rep. Mary Mushinsky (85th) in Opposition to SB 1085, An Act Concerning the Legalization of the Retail Sale and Possession of Cannabis and Concerning Erasure of Criminal Records in the Case of Convictions Based on the Possession of a Small Amount of Cannabis

Before the Judiciary Committee
Public Hearing Mar. 22, 2019

10:00 a.m. Rm 2C

I oppose the bill except for Section 17, which I support as it sets up a procedure for erasure of criminal records based on possession of 1.5 ounces or less of marijuana. Erasure will allow a person to apply for jobs and resume a productive life after a conviction for small scale possession.

I oppose the rest of the bill, principally because of the deleterious effect of cannabis on young brains under age 25. THC's chemical structure is very similar to the body's own brain chemical anandamide. This similarity allows THC to bind with receptors, affect brain areas and disrupt various mental and physical functions: memory, thinking, concentration, and sensory and time perception.

Even adults over age 25 may not be able to drive safely and may have problems engaging in physical activities after ingesting THC. People who have taken large doses of THC may experience an acute psychosis, which includes hallucinations and delusions.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which has summarized numerous scientific research papers, adverse consequences of marijuana use include:

Acute (present during intoxication)

Impaired short-term memory
Impaired attention, judgement, and other cognitive functions
Impaired coordination and balance
Increased heart rate

Anxiety, paranoia

Psychosis (uncommon)

Persistent (lasting longer than intoxication, but may not be permanent)

Impaired learning and coordination

Sleep problems

Long-term (cumulative effects of repeated use)

Potential for marijuana addiction

Impairments in learning and memory with potential loss of IQ

Increased risk of chronic cough, bronchitis

Increased risk of other drug and alcohol use disorders

Increased risk of schizophrenia in people with genetic vulnerability

The effects on adults over 25 appear to be less of a threat, although we must still guard against impaired driving, impaired caregivers, affected manufacturing employees and psychotic effects from high concentrations of THC. Local police have said they don't know how they will test for impairment.

Please delete Sections 1-16 and approve only Section 17, which would expunge records. This action will help young adults reach their full potential. Thank you.

Background-link to summary of research articles:

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/letter-director>

Especially see articles:

How marijuana produces its effects

Does marijuana affect driving?

What are marijuana's long-term effects on the brain?

Is marijuana addictive?

How does marijuana use affect school, work and social life?

Is there a link between marijuana use and psychiatric disorders?

Young adult sequelae of adolescent cannabis use: an integrative analysis (2014)

The persistence of the association between adolescent cannabis use and common mental disorders into young adulthood

Brain morphological changes and early marijuana use (2000)

The long-term cognitive consequences of adolescent exposure to recreational drugs of abuse (2018)

Trends of major depressive episode among people with cannabis use: Findings from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2006-2015 (2019)